

In the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ A separating apparatus comprising a separating chamber in which cyclonic separation is able to take place, an inlet to the separating chamber and a shroud comprising a wall having a multiplicity of through-holes forming an outlet from the separating chamber, ~~the shroud further comprising and~~ a lip extending away from the wall, the lip comprising a free distal end projecting into the separating chamber, ~~characterized in that lip has and having~~ a plurality of apertures therethrough.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the separating chamber has a longitudinal axis and the lip extends substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the wall and the lip are generally cylindrical.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein the apertures are spaced from the through-holes by an imperforate portion of the wall ~~and/or or~~ lip.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~claims 3 and~~ claim 3, wherein the breadth of the imperforate portion of the wall ~~and/or or~~ lip is at least one tenth of the diameter of the wall.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the breadth of the imperforate portion of the wall ~~and/or or~~ lip is ~~substantially~~ about one tenth of the diameter of the wall.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 4, wherein the combined area of the apertures at the upstream end thereof is no less than the area of the inlet to the separating chamber.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in claim ~~[[7]]~~ 4, wherein the combined area of the apertures on the upstream side thereof is greater than the area of the inlet to the separating chamber.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 4, wherein the length of the lip is at least one tenth of the diameter of the wall of the shroud.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein the length of the lip is at least one fifth of the diameter of the wall of the shroud.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 4, wherein the apertures are tapered, the upstream end of each aperture being of smaller cross-sectional area than the downstream end thereof.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 4, wherein a second wall is provided radially inwardly of the lip such that a cavity is formed between the wall, the second wall and the lip.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the length of the lip is at least as great as the distance between the lip and the second wall.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 4, wherein the separating chamber is substantially cylindrical in cross-section so as to form a relatively low-efficiency cyclone.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 14, further comprising a tapering cyclone positioned downstream of the shroud.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~Separating~~ The separating apparatus as claimed in ~~claims 14 and claim~~ claim 15, wherein the tapering cyclone has a higher efficiency than the relatively low-efficiency cyclone.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A vacuum cleaner incorporating the separating apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 4.

19. (New) The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the apertures are spaced from the through-holes by an imperforate portion of the wall or lip.

20. (New) The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the breadth of the imperforate portion of the wall or lip is at least one tenth of the diameter of the wall.

21. (New) The separating apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the breadth of the imperforate portion of the wall or lip is equal to about one tenth of the diameter of the wall.